

Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery

Activity Report 2015/16



Associates at the *MashUp* Special Event, February 19, 2016

Barbara Kruger, *Untitled (SmashUp)*, 2016

Site-specific installation in the Rotunda of the Vancouver Art Gallery

Photo credit: VAG photographer

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This report prepared by Annick Boisset, co-chair of the Executive Committee of the Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery, will be presented at the December 5th, 2016 general meeting held in the Gallery Rooftop Pavilion, followed by a Festive Celebration generously sponsored by the Gallery.

Report available online at: www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/support/membership/Associates

ASSOCIATES OF THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY (AVAG) ACTIVITY REPORT 2015-2016

INTRODUCTION

The reporting period ended June 2016 has been another important year in the history of the Associates. Last year's optimism for greater things to come has materialized in many ways, yet with unfinished business.

This report provides insight into the workings of the Associates executive and standing committees. We hope many Associates members will have enjoyed participating in our activities, as much as our volunteer committees have enjoyed creating, planning and staging each event. Many thanks to all Associates and committee members, as well as to the Gallery staff for their assistance and collaboration.

Our educational programs continue to attract many who want to learn about art, historical, modern or contemporary, at art DVD or lecture presentations in the familiar Gallery environment; highly informative docent-guided tours of current Gallery exhibitions; and, the ever-popular series of visits to Vancouver artist studios.

Special Events continue to surprise us with new venues for art & social experiences. Throughout the year, Associates discovered public art and private collections, celebrated friendship at the traditional Welcome Back Lunch and the Gallery-sponsored Festive Celebration, enjoyed themed events such as the Associates *MashUp* and *Picasso Summer Soirée*, while raising funds for the Gallery.

Finally, our Art Travel program took us again this year to great art destinations, such as ever-favorite Portland WA, and amazing Winnipeg that so impressed us with its vibrant art community and Prairie hospitality.

As a measure of success, the Associates membership stands at approximately 200 at the end of June 2016 (compared with 195 last year), thanks to the sustained interest of long-time members and many new members attracted to our educational programs, unique art experiences and travel programs,

Another measure of success has been our fundraising level, significantly higher this year, at \$54,000 for FY 2016 (compared with \$25,000 FY 2015). This result is due as always to our Special Events and Art Travel programs. Increasingly this year, direct donations and support from individual Associates and others among the Gallery community have also greatly contributed to our fundraising effort. They are deeply thanked here for their generosity. Although the Educational program, being a free benefit to Associates, does not contribute to fundraising, it is a major element of success, attracting new members.

Our continued success at “raising friends and funds” has earned us the Gallery recognition as a **Community Partner** for our continued support of the Gallery, over the 65-year existence of the Associates. Something to celebrate!

More details below in the Development section.

Annually, the traditional **Noreen Anderson Award** is presented to the Associate-of-the-year for distinguished volunteer service, highlighting the need for Associates to volunteer their skills and time to make our programs ever more attractive. This year’s award is presented to **Joanne Thorpe** (Special Events co-chair) for her long dedicated service. Judy Lindsay (education chair), will present the 2016 award at the *Festive Celebration* on December 5. **Thank you, Joanne!**

Highlights of activities during the reporting period are shown in the different sections of this report, followed by individual reports of the committee chairs.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Building on the findings of last year’s Focus Group on the future of the Associates, the Gallery’s “best-kept secret” required a stronger structure and enhanced collaboration with the Gallery. An *ad hoc* committee was formed to revise the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that had governed the Associates during the ‘transition’ period started with the creation in 2012 of the a Gallery Associates membership. Several structural changes were immediately implemented such as a new name, Executive committee, away from transitional Steering. To improve communication, committee chairs, chosen by committee members, are now members of the Executive committee, reporting on activity at monthly meetings.

Of major significance, the findings of the focus group prompted Lyn Tyler, Director of Development, to present the Associates with a Proposal for Development, titled “Community Partner: *In Dialogue with Carr* Series and 4h Floor Exhibitions”. This ambitious proposal offers enhanced collaboration and greater recognition with a model to grow Associates’ membership numbers and art experiences, provided our enhanced fundraising effort. The Proposal was approved by the Executive committee in early December with the goal of raising \$250,000 over five years with no penalty and a trial first year raising \$50,000. More details below in the Development section.

As for revising the MOU, the ad hoc committee drafted a new “Associates Partnership Agreement” that combined many updated features of the old MOU and new opportunities offered in the new Proposal for Development. After discussion with the directors of Marketing & Communication, Development and Membership manager, a draft Letter of Agreement was prepared for signature by the Director of the Gallery.

Members of the ad hoc committee were: Annick Boisset, Gabrielle Campbell, Susan Evans, Evelyn Froese, Judy Lindsay and Grace Robin. They are gratefully thanked here for a major effort that will hopefully govern the Associates for years to come.

The Associates Partnership Agreement will be posted on the Associates webpage once final.

Among other committee news:

- Evelyn Froese was appointed co-chair of the Executive Committee with Annick Boisset
- Secretary Heidi Pullem resigned at the end of November She is thanked here for her long commitment to the Associates
- Helen Cunningham resigned from Communications coordinator. Eva Murray replaced her as Database coordinator. Thank you, Helen and Eva.

Of Gallery staff news of interest to the workings of the Associates, we note:

- Lyn Tyler, new Director of Development from earlier Director of Annual Giving
- Johanie Marcoux, new Director of Marketing, Communication & Public Affairs. Introduced to the Executive committee by Membership manager Liz Ayre, Johanie outlined a renewed focus on branding, upgrading the Gallery website (including the Associates webpage) and greater membership engagement
- Paul Larocque's departure from the Gallery now missed as a frequent speaker to the Associates. A great friend of the Associates, Paul was the main architect of the Gallery Associates membership category and the 2012 MOU.

MEMBERSHIP

As already mentioned, there were 200 Associates at the end of June 2016, compared with 195 members, same date last year. This is encouraging, considering those who have left due to life events or pursuing other interests. Sadly, we fondly remember friends who left us during the past year: Jane Banfield, Shirley Friend, and more recently Catherine Gourley and Anne Person.

Most new Associates join by upgrading their regular Gallery membership to the Associates membership. Our thanks go to David Steiner at the Membership desk in the Gallery lobby for promoting the Associates. Word-of-mouth also attracts many new Associates. Others do join mainly to support the Gallery with a higher-than-standard membership fee. Attracting new members from a pool of 35,000 Gallery members, welcoming new members and member retention are always areas for improvement.

Associates membership is administered by the Gallery Membership Office under Membership Manager Liz Ayre, who reports to Johanie Marcoux. As such AVAG has no formal Associates Membership committee. Coordination between the Membership Office and the Associates, who are close to their members, has run very smoothly thanks to Liz' participation, as *ex-officio* member, to the Executive committee, as well as attending other committee meetings as needed. Associates membership lists generated by Liz are shared with the executive for information and for direct emailing to our membership. Liz' commitment to the Associates is greatly appreciated.

As a reminder, the table below shows the schedule of Associates Membership fees.

Associates Membership Fees

Membership	Annual Fee	Eligible Cardholder(s)
Individual Associate Membership	\$225	1 cardholder
Associate Couple Membership	\$375	2 cardholders
Associate Senior (65+) Membership	\$175	1 cardholder
Associate Senior (65+) Couple Membership	\$300	2 cardholders

- Associates members are entitled to all the benefits of standard Gallery membership. They receive a Gallery membership card with AVAG and expiry decal
- in addition, they receive all the Associates benefits listed in the Associates rack card and described in detail in the present report
- close to their membership anniversary date, Associates members are reminded to renew their membership by paying their dues and get new decals from the Membership Desk in the lobby of the Gallery.

Notes

- If any regular Gallery member wishes to “upgrade” to Associates membership level, they will “top up” to their specific Associates fee. More information from the Membership Desk
- if any Associate decides to “upgrade” to Benefactor Leadership level, the \$1,500 Gallery Benefactor membership fee will include their Associates membership. More information from the Development Office.

COMMUNICATIONS

Eva Murray, who replaced Helen Cunningham as database coordinator, has diligently maintained the Associates mailing list on the office computer in Room 100 and sent notices & reminders on behalf of committee chairs. Eva has also assisted preparing Newsletters with input from executive and committee chairs.

There has long been discussions and attempts at forming a Communications committee to produce Newsletters, reply to email and phone messages, welcome new members and more. The role of a Communication Committee still needs to be more clearly defined,

particularly in view of the Future Gallery. Increased assistance from Liz Ayre in the area of communications is much appreciated. The Associates webpage on the Gallery website has improved and we invite all members to visit us more frequently at:

www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/Support/Membership/Associates

Several communications initiatives took place during the reporting year:

- the Directory (8th edition) was distributed at the Sep 10/15 Welcome Back Luncheon
- Helen Cunningham was awarded the Noreen Anderson award at the Dec 1/15 Festive Celebration
- a General Meeting was held prior to that same Festive Celebration in the popular Rooftop Pavilion, where co-chair Annick Boisset presented last year's Activity Report, followed by an outlook for the winter and spring programs by co-chair Evelyn and committee chairs
- the *Proposal for Development* was presented at a kick-off meeting co-chaired by Lyn Tyler and Paul Larocque on Feb 11/16.

DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned earlier, the past year saw a major collaborative initiative in Associates engagement. Started as an ambitious proposal, the Community Partner: *In Dialogue with Carr Series and 4th Floor Exhibitions* program, presented to the Executive Committee in September 2015 by Director of Development Lyn Tyler, offered:

- close collaboration and professional assistance for fundraising initiatives
- enhanced visibility and recognition as a VAG Community Partner, a major donor over our long history (second highest, recorded at over \$2 million dollars);

in exchange for our enhanced fundraising effort:

- with the goal of raising \$250,000 over the next five years, with no penalty and a trial first year raising \$50,000
- to support the Gallery *In Dialogue with Carr Series* program

Note: The *In Dialogue with Carr Series* is a popular program of exhibitions on the 4h floor of the Gallery, where contemporary artists are invited to select works by Emily Carr from the VAG permanent collection and pair them with their own works.

Approved by the Executive committee in early December, enhanced collaboration has already materialized with the Development, Marketing & Communications, and Membership units, with co-chair Evelyn Froese in a leadership role.

An early example of success has been the Associates *Picasso Summer Soirée* on June 25, with participation of forty VAG Leadership members invited by Lyn Tyler.

FINANCIALS

As already mentioned, the Associates raised \$54,000 in FY 2016 (compared with approx. \$27,000 in FY 2015) as our donation to the Gallery received by the Development Department. Several factors can explain this significantly higher achievement. Operational profits and donations (with donation tax receipts) continue to be generated by our fundraising activities, such as special events and the Art Travel program. Generous individual members and members from the Gallery community made significant contributions.

This year's donation also includes a one-time approx. \$12,000 amount described in the next section on Dissolution.

A small Membership budget is approved annually for incidental expenses for the educational program (art DVDs or films, guest lecturer honoraria or gifts, annual Associates Directory cost, etc.) and to support the Associates year-end recognition event.

DISSOLUTION

And now, for those interested in what finally happened of the 'prior' Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery Society, here is the last chapter, called Dissolution.

A long-standing issue, namely the legal dissolution of the 'prior' Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery, a BC-registered society since 1951, was finally resolved by automatic dissolution in 2015 after a three-year process. The root cause of the delay in obtaining dissolution under the BC Society Act, after the creation of a new VAG Associates membership category in 2012, was a historical non-compliance in filing income tax returns with Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) "since inception". Compelled to file ten years of back returns and liable to heavy penalties, and assisted by then VAG Director of Finance Beth McInnis and Associate Director Paul Larocque, the firm Rolfe Benson LLP was retained as counsel to file income tax returns and Non-Profit declarations for a ten-year back period since 2002 (a huge job!) and up until final dissolution. Some funds were deposited in trust with Rolfe Benson, before final transfer of assets to VAG, to cover any unplanned penalties.

After favorable ruling from CRA in October 2013, another 'snag' prevented Voluntary Dissolution under the BC Society Act for failing to pass an AGM resolution to that effect for lack of remaining members. The only option was then to wait another two to three years for automatic Dissolution for Non-Compliance under the BC Society Act. Automatic dissolution was made effective July 21, 2015 and the name Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery society was removed from the BC Registry of Societies.

The last chapter of the **great story of the Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery Society from 1951 to 2015** has now been written. Twelve thousand dollars held in trust with Rolfe Benson have now been transferred to VAG, as donation to the Gallery from the now-dissolved Associates Society. Many thanks to all the Associates throughout our history and particularly to those involved in the final steps, Heidi Pullem, Judy Lindsay, the Department of Finance, yours truly and the directors of the last Associates board, named in the Society Summary: Annick Boisset, Christine Burdett, Helen Cunningham, Ellen Doise, Darlene Forrester, Judy Lindsay, Grace Robin, Heidi Pullem and Elizabeth Snow. Society Summary for the Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery available on request or from BC Registry Services.

EDUCATION 2015/16 - Report by Judy Lindsay, Education Committee chair

The three main components of the Associates' educational program added up to a full and varied menu of items over the past year, and attracted gratifying numbers of members.

Art in the Morning/Evening

Guiding tours of current exhibitions on Tuesday evenings and Friday mornings, Darlene Forrester expanded our understanding of the art in *Residue: Persistence of the Real; Embracing Canada: Landscapes from Krieghoff to the Group of Seven; MashUp: The Birth of Modern Culture; and Picasso: The Artist and His Muses.*

Darlene has the good fortune to be a gallery docent, which allows her to learn deeply about the artists and exhibitions. She then devotes additional hours to research that, along with her warm personality and love of art, enrich the experience of her tours.

Artist Studio Tours

Ellen Doise introduced us to many local artists who kindly took time out from their work to talk about their painting and sculpture, giving us a close look at the vigorous local art scene. Ellen's dedication to the search for new artists assures Associates of many wonderful encounters to come.

The artists visited were Lori Goldberg, Tracey Tarling, Sandrine Pelissier, Leanne Christie, Wan-Li Zhang, Georgina Lohan, Philippe Sokazo, Fiona Ackerman and Sara Morrison.

We are grateful to these artists, and to the members who suggest new artists to visit.

Monday Morning Study Group

Meeting every second Monday at the gallery, members expand their knowledge of artists from across the centuries and artistic spectrum. The medium is usually a DVD, and occasionally some members will introduce the subjects and add to the educational quotient from their own research; for that we thank Jill Brown and Diana Garred. From time to time we bring in speakers to ensure exposure to the contemporary Vancouver scene.

Among the artists and subjects we explored were the great contemporary Iranian/Canadian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli. Film-maker Terrence Turner entertained us with the stories behind the making of his film about Tanavoli, *Poetry in Bronze*. As well, young Vancouver film artist Adad Hanna talked about his art, illustrated by a power-point presentation, while an exhibition of his work was on display at the Equinox Gallery. In addition we viewed DVDs on the Dadaists, Australian modernists, Tania Brugera, Katsushika Hokusai and many others.

In addition to the above regular programming we also offer special education events, which this past year included a visit with the gallery's conservationist, Monica Smith, and to Malaspina Printmakers for demonstrations in print-making. Both events were informational and delightful, and we hope to repeat them in years to come.

Judy Lindsay, chair of education

SPECIAL EVENTS 2015/16 – Report by Joanne Thorpe, Special Events Committee chair

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Organizer(s)</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Welcome Back Lunch	Thur Sept 10/15	Jericho Tennis Club	Eva Grunfeld	\$45	50
AVAG YVR Tour	Fri Nov 13/ 15	Vancouver Int'l	Marianne Szabo	\$25	38
Festive Celebration	Tue Dec 1/15	Vancouver Art Gallery	Spec Events Ctee.	VAG hosted	82
Collectors Tour	Sun Feb 7/16	Parviz Tanavoli	Spec Events Ctee	\$75	19
Spring Lunch	Fri Apr 8/16	Capilano G&CC	Joanne Thorpe	\$50	49
Collectors Tour	Sun May 1/16	Freybe Home	Spec Events Ctee	\$75	29
Summer Picasso Soirée	Sun Jun 26/16	Vancouver Art Gallery	Lyn Tyler & Ctee	\$150	93

The Special Events Committee of the Vancouver Art Gallery enjoyed an excellent FY 2016 netting Fiscal Year proceeds of \$5,305.

Our net results do not include the Summer Soirée which was supported in part by additional funding from the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Thank you to the Associates members of the Special Events Committee for their creative ideas and boundless energy:

Dianne Bentz, Sally Coombs, Evelyn Froese, Eva Grunfeld, Bobbie Kadlec, June Matheson, Debbie Side, Joan Stokes and Marianne Szabo.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Thorpe, Chair, Special Events Committee

TRAVEL 2015/16 - Report by Christine Burdett, Travel Committee chair

Travel Committee Members for this year were Annick Boisset, Barbara Cross, Sandra Heath, Marti Oppenheimer, Carolyn Wark and Christine Burdett, Chair. Christine gives many thanks to the Committee members for their time and dedication to the research and planning of the Art Tours this past year. As well, thank you to Liz Ayre, Membership Manager, for her invaluable support throughout the year and to the Finance office.

October 27th to October 30th 2015, Portland, Oregon Art Tour

After an easy private coach ride from Vancouver, a group dinner set the tone for a fun and stimulating art tour. The Hotel Lucia was our base, near art galleries, Pearl District shopping area, restaurants and the famed Powell bookstore.

The date of the trip was chosen to coincide with the exhibition "*Seeing Nature*" *Landscape Masterworks of the Paul G. Allen Family Collection* at the Portland Art Museum. A private guided tour took us through five centuries of artworks by 39 artists, some of whom were Jan Brueghel the Younger, Monet, Cezanne, JMW Turner, O'Keeffe and Hockney. Of special note, the Gustav Klimt work, Buchenwald (Birch Forest) was one of the five paintings recovered by the BlochBauer and Altmann families from the Austrian Government in 2006 after being stolen by the Nazis (featured in the movie *Woman in Gold*). A storied walking tour of the architecture of Portland's was most stimulating.

Charles Froelick of *Froelick Gallery* very generously had arranged two private Collector visits. One was at the beautiful home of collector and prominent philanthropist Jordan Schnitzer, who owns one of the largest print collections of international artists from the historical to the contemporary. His family foundation loans prints to numerous educational and art institutions mostly throughout the USA.

At his home, collector Doug Macy, urban architect of the landmark Pioneer Square, shared personal stories of his ceramic vessels and sculptures, and his support of young sculptors and painters. He had invited three young artists from Seattle to meet with us.

Our last day was a visit to the home and studio of the well-known artist Katherine Ace for a fascinating talk about her inspiration and artistic techniques. Finally, we visited the Oregon College of Arts and Crafts for a tour of the educational facilities and then lunch. A most stimulating tour with comfortable lodgings and delicious Portland cuisine!

This tour had 25 participants and a budget surplus.

May 16th to May 21st 2016, Winnipeg Art Tour

The heritage Fort Garry Hotel was our base for this tour, near many historic landmarks in this important Canadian city known for its arts and culture.

The tour opened with a reception at the *Border Crossings* office, where director Meeka Walsh gave our group an enthusiastic description of Winnipeg's art and historical scene. On our first artist studio visit, we discovered the photographic and performance work of artist Sarah Anne Johnson ranging from utopia to helplessness based on the true story of psychic experimentation on her grandmother. Afterwards we enjoyed an architectural

walking tour of the Exchange District led by professor Serena Keshavjee from the U of W then a visit to the LKAP Gallery where we met minimalist artist Michael Dumontier. At a small theater, next to her studio, we met young performance artist Ming Hon, who screened a few of her videos and had some of us dance in a performance art number!

The Associates of the Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG) kindly hosted our group at the home of an important art collector and donor of the WAG. This couple had collected mainly Manitoba art over many years. It was also interesting to compare notes with about ten WAG Associates invited to join us. One of the highlights of the tour was the guided tour of the WAG, as well as meeting with Director Dr. Borys and Darlene Wight, curator of the important Inuit art collection to be displayed in the future extension of the WAG.

Private collector visits included, in addition to the first home, an important and colourful glass collection in a spectacular private home, and a delightful reception. We also visited the architectural home of an international art collector, with works by Sol LeWitt (on a wall, of course), ceramic dogs by Jeff Koons, Daniel Buren stripes, and more.

There was so much sight-seeing to do in Winnipeg!

- most impressed by the nearly two-hour long visit of the remarkable Canadian Museum of Human Rights, worthy of a return trip to Winnipeg
- history, architecture and the popular *Hermetic* tour of the Legislative Building
- the French St Boniface Church and grave of Louis Riel
- and on the last day, for the tourist in us, the famous polar bears at the zoo, or
- an educational visit to the Art Lab at the U of M that many Winnipeg artists graduated from.

Everyone was most impressed by the famed hospitality and generosity of the Winnipeg artistic community.

This tour has 24 participants and a budget surplus.

Christine Burdett, Chair, Travel Committee

VCAM (Volunteer Committees of Art Museums) - Report by Annick Boisset, VCAM Region 10 co-director

Annick Boisset, Debbie Side, as well as two VAG docents attended the 22nd VCAM Triennial Conference in Richmond VA last October (2015). Over 80 participants from 40 art museums in Canada and the USA, among them the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the McMichael Collection. VCAM offers a network of collaboration and communications among sister organizations in both countries. The Vancouver Art Gallery has long been a member with varying degrees of involvement. The executive committee approved and paid for Gallery renewal of the new two-year membership for continued networking opportunities. The next conference will be held in October 2018 in Detroit MI. [Report available on request.](#)

THANK YOU!

In closing, it is my great pleasure to thank once again all those who have contributed to make the past year 2015/16 so successful.

This report is my last one. I have now stepped down from my position as chair (and co-chair) of the executive committee after the last four years helping steer the transition period and launch the next phase, after four earlier years as president of the 'prior' Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery. For many of you, we have known each other for a long time and developed true friendship! With increasing numbers of new Associates, it has been so rewarding to witness the renewal of the Associates and our growing influence within the Gallery. I am very grateful to Evelyn Froese, my co-chair this past year, for her drive and efficiency. My best wishes to new co-chairs Evelyn and Susan Evans to lead the great team at the executive the executive committee and enthusiastic standing committees. It was important for me to write this last report to thank personally every single member for their commitment to the Associates. I will remain an Associate!

My thanks go first to all members of the past year Executive committee:

Evelyn Froese, co-chair
Christine Burdett, Travel committee chair
Helen Cunningham and Eva Murray, Communications
Susan Evans
Judy Lindsay, Education committee chair
Heidi Pullem, Secretary
Grace Robin
Joanne Thorpe and Maryanne Szabo, Special Events committee co-chairs
Denis Walz
Liz Ayre, ex officio, VAG Membership manager

My sincere thanks to Gallery Director Kathleen Bartels, Development director Lyn Tyler, Marketing & Communication director Johanie Marcoux, Membership manager Liz Ayre and her office, the Finance Department many among Gallery staff for their assistance.

Respectfully submitted to:
Executive committee members
Liz Ayre, Membership manager
Johanie Marcoux, director, Marketing, Communications & Public Affairs
Lyn Tyler, director, Development
Ann Webb, Associate Director, director Engagement and Strategic Initiatives
Director Kathleen Bartels

by Annick Boisset, co-chair, Executive Committee
Associates of the Vancouver Art Gallery



Art in the Morning – *Residue* Sept 25/15



at Sandrine Pelissier studio – Jan 19/16



at collector Parviz Tanavoli, Aug 2/16



Portland Art Tour, Oct 27/15



Winnipeg Art Tour: with the *Famous Five*, and at the Manitoba Legislative Building, May 2016